**The boys**

**By Stu Bagby**

It’s a funny old world
I tell the boys.
It seems that Bonnie Prince Charlie
was born in Rome.

‘Och, si,’ they nod, well,
they’re Aberdeen Angus after all.
I call them boys
but strictly speaking they’re steers,

Or castrati you could say,
though it’s a word
that they might flinch at.
And to one who has a raw spot

I say, ‘that is a graze,
and when you eat the grass,
that too is grazing.’
They mull this over

As we wander to the boundary fence
where Henare is finishing up.
He offers me some
of his trimmed-off branches.

I look to next year’s firewood,
the boys make eyes at the foliage.
‘ Yes, thanks, Henare,’ I say.
‘ Si, grazie Henare,’ sing the boys. ‘Grazie, ciao.’